



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman**

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MEDIA NOTE

Joint Statement on the Upcoming Sudan National Elections

Following is the text of a joint statement by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Støre, and United Kingdom Foreign Secretary David Miliband on the upcoming national elections in Sudan.

Begin Text:

National elections in Sudan in April will represent a major milestone in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Sudan's twenty-two year civil war, and are an important opportunity for the people of Sudan to participate in the political process.

We urge all parties in Sudan to work urgently to ensure that elections can proceed peacefully and credibly in April. We are deeply concerned by reports of continued administrative and logistical challenges, as well as restrictions on political freedoms. We call on the Government of Sudan, the National Elections Commission, and all political parties to engage in further dialogue to resolve practical obstacles, procedural impediments, and address allegations of intimidation, harassment, and safety concerns, and other legitimate concerns raised by various political parties. We continue to urge the parties to improve conditions on the ground in Darfur and create a secure environment conducive to Darfuri participation.

Irrespective of the outcome of elections, it is essential that work continues and is accelerated to meet remaining CPA deadlines. Progress is needed urgently to complete border demarcation, to establish the commissions that will supervise the referenda for the South and Abyei, to conduct popular consultations in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan, and to negotiate sustainable post-CPA arrangements in areas such as wealth-sharing, citizenship and assets, and liabilities.

We reiterate our commitment to ensure that the referenda must happen on schedule and that their outcomes need to be respected. It is time to redouble efforts to achieve these ends. We urge all parties in Sudan and all regional and international partners to work together to achieve the peaceful future that the people of Sudan deserve.

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